

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 07272 01 OF 02 171257Z POSS DUPE  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-07 OMB-01 AID-05  
IGA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
/097 W

-----092721 171335Z /41

P R 171130Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2865  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMCONSUL KARACHI  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 7272

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PK  
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SITUATION: PARTIES PREPARE FOR POLLS

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 7219 B) ISLAMABAD 7227

1. STATEMENTS BY VARIOUS PNA AND PPP LEADERS OVER THE  
WEEKEND INDICATE THAT BOTH PARTIES ARE BEGINNING TO MAKE  
ACTIVE PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTIONS. THIS PROCESS HAS NO  
DOUBT BEEN STIMULATED BY GENERAL ZIA, WHO REAFFIRMED ONCE  
AGAIN IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ON JULY 14 THAT HE IS DETERMINED  
TO HOLD ELECTIONS AND HAND OVER POWER TO A CIVILIAN  
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 07272 01 OF 02 171257Z POSS DUPE

GOVERNMENT IN OCTOBER (REFTELS). ALTHOUGH SOME OBSERVERS  
CONTINUE TO DOUBT THAT BHUTTO WILL CONTEST, IT APPEARS  
MORE AND MORE LIKELY THAT HE WILL. THE ONLY QUESTION MARK  
REGARDING THE PNA IS WHETHER THEY CAN STAY TOGETHER OR  
NOT. WITH BHUTTO APPARENTLY ENTERING THE RACE, IT IS  
LIKELY THAT THEY WILL REMAIN UNITED.

2. IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW WITH NAWA-I-WAQT ON JULY 15, PNA GENERAL SECRETARY GHAFOR SAID THAT THE PNA HAS SUBMITTED ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO GENERAL ZIA CONCERNING THE ELECTION SCHEDULE AND CODE OF ETHICS. HE ASSERTED THAT THE PNA WANTS BHUTTO TO CONTEST AND HAS NO FEARS ABOUT CONFRONTING HIM AT THE POLLS. THE PNA, HE SAID, WILL DEFINITELY NOMINATE CANDIDATES THIS TIME IN BALUCHISTAN. (JANG REPORTS THAT AKBAR BUGTI, FORMER GOVERNOR OF BALUCHISTAN, WILL SOON JOIN ONE OF THE PNA PARTIES, POSSIBLY TEHRIK.) PNA PRESIDENT MUFTI MAHMUD, REPORTEDLY SPEAKING TO OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS IN RAWALPINDI BY PHONE, CONFIDED THAT ZIA HAD ASSURED HIM THAT ALL FALSE CASES AGAINST PNA WORKERS WOULD BE REMOVED TO PAVE THE WAY FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS.

3. RETIRED AIR MARSHAL ASGHAR KHAN SAID HE IS HAPPY BHUTTO HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM POWER, BUT FEELS THAT HE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO RUN FOR OFFICE. IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW WITH THE BBC, REPRINTED IN NAWA-I-WAQT ON JULY 16, THE AIR MARSHAL STATED THAT NO CASES SHOULD BE BROUGHT AGAINST THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER TO KEEP HIM OUT OF THE ELECTIONS. ASKED IF THE PNA WOULD STAY TOGETHER IF BHUTTO WAS KEPT FROM RUNNING OR BOYCOTTED THE POLLS, ASGHAR REPLIED THAT THE OPPOSITION IS ONE PARTY NOW, BUT THAT IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN. HE ENDORSED GENERAL ZIA'S IMPOSITION OF STERN ISLAMIC PUNISHMENT FOR THEFT AND ABUSE OF WOMEN, CLAIMING THE PNA WOULD HAVE INTRODUCED SIMILAR

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 07272 01 OF 02 171257Z POSS DUPE

REFORMS IF THEY WERE IN POWER.

4. WHILE THE PNA CONTINUES TO GET READY FOR ELECTIONS, BHUTTO HAS INDICATED THAT HE, TOO, IS PREPARING TO CONTEST. MUSAWAT, THE OFFICIAL PPP NEWSPAPER, REPORTED ON JULY 15 THAT BHUTTO HAD INFORMED SHEIKH RAFIQUE AHMED, PPP PRESIDENT IN PUNJAB, BY PHONE THAT HE WOULD LAUNCH A FULL-SCALE WAR AGAINST IMPERIALISTS AND REACTIONARIES DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. IN AN EDITORIAL THE SAME DAY, MUSAWAT ASSERTED THAT BHUTTO'S REMARKS HAVE REMOVED ALL DOUBTS ABOUT HIS DESIRE TO CONTEST THE ELECTIONS. THE PARTY, IT STATED, HAD PREVIOUSLY AGREED TO HOLD ELECTIONS AND WOULD NOT BACK OUT NOW. THE EDITORIAL PRAISED ZIA FOR HIS RECENT STATEMENT THAT BHUTTO WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR RIGGING THE MARCH ELECTIONS. IN A SIMILAR EDITORIAL ON JULY 16, MUSAWAT LAUDED ZIA'S ANNOUNCEMENT AT HIS JULY 14 NEWS CONFERENCE THAT NO POLITICIANS WOULD BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL BY THE MARTIAL LAW REGIME. THE FOLLOWING DAY MUSAWAT REPORTED THAT BHUTTO WOULD SOON TOUR THE PUNJAB TO MEET PARTY WORKERS AND ASSESS THE POLITICAL SITUATION. QUOTING THE FORMER PM, THE STORY SAID THAT ANY DECISION TO CONTEST THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE LEFT TO THE PARTY AS A

WHOLE TO DECIDE.

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 7272

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

5. BENAZIR BHUTTO, THE FORMER PM'S ELDEST DAUGHTER, TOLD  
A MUSAWAT REPORTED IN KARACHI ON JULY 15 THAT PAKISTAN IS  
HER FAMILY'S  
MOTHERLAND AND VOWED THEY WOULD NEVER LEAVE. ASKED ABOUT  
HER FUTURE PLANS, SHE REPLIED THAT SHE HAD FINISHED HER  
EDUCATION AT OXFORD AND WOULD REMAIN IN PAKISTAN WHERE  
SHE HOPED TO TEACH.

6. TO HELP SPEED PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELECTIONS, THE  
MARTIAL LAW REGIME ANNOUNCED ON JULY 15 THAT JUSTICE  
MUSHTAQ HUSSAIN, ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE LAHORE HIGH  
COURT, HAS BEEN APPOINTED CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER.  
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 07272 02 OF 02 171332Z

MUSTAQ, THE SENIOR-MOST JUDGE ON THE HIGH COURT AND ONCE  
FEDERAL LAW SECRETARY, IS NOTED FOR HIS INTEGRITY AND  
ABILITY AS A JURIST. IN ADDITION TO BEING ELECTION  
COMMISSIONER, HE WILL ALSO ACT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE ELECTION  
RULES COMMITTEE WHICH WILL MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME ON  
JULY 17 TO FRAME NECESSARY REGULATIONS TO SAFEGUARD  
THE POLLING PROCESS. MEMBERS OF THE RULES COMMITTEE INCLUDE  
ATTORNEY GENERAL SHARIFUDDIN PIRZADA, AD HOC SUPREME  
COURT JUSTICE NASIM HASSAN SHAH, A.K. BROHI, AN EMINENT  
LAWYER, AND I.H. BURNI, A WELL KNOWN JOURNALIST.  
HUMMEL

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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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